

Supervisors of San Francisco to take such steps at once as shall secure a prompt co-operation of the Boards of Health of the city and State, under the supervision of the United States Marine Hospital Service, to the end that all danger from bubonic plague may be eradicated; that all fears of infection may be removed; that the confidence of the Boards of Health of other States and Territories may be restored, and that no injury, however remote, may result to the foreign and interstate commerce, and to this end we hereby pledge to the officials of the State and city every aid and support of the various commercial bodies which we represent.

MERCANTILE JOINT COMMITTEE,

Frank J. Symmes, Chairman; L. M. King, Secretary.

Some of the wide-awake Sonoma County physicians are about to organize a county society under the plan provided for membership in the State Society.

#### USEFULNESS OF COUNTY SOCIETY.

Before the annual meeting in April every important section of the State will have completed arrangements for organization along the same lines, at least the indications point that way. Members of the State Society residing in localities where there are no county societies, should feel enough interest in the purposes and plans of the State Society to devote a little time toward organizing such a society. Take the initiative, appoint yourself a committee of one to call a meeting of your local confreres. Make a start. Half a dozen good live men, interested in keeping the profession on a high plane, free from the invasion of incompetents; protection of their rights under the laws; alive to the importance of keeping abreast the times in medical and surgical achievements, and who believe that a frequent exchange of ideas tends to brighten the mind, these men—half a dozen—may start a medical society, which in a remarkably short time will increase in numbers and grow in interest. Dr. Cheney in his address of welcome last year to the State Society well said:

It is undoubtedly good for us to meet together and exchange views. No man knows it all. Each one is able to learn something from his neighbor. In the rush of actual work with our patients during the year, we have no time to talk over cases with each other and so to find out how the other man does his work. It is only by such meetings as this that opportunity is afforded for mutual exchange of experiences in our profession. We who belong to this Society and attend its meetings, feel that we are helped by them to increased usefulness.

The same is true of the county society, and in some respects the subordinate is of more value to the member than the parent body. Particularly is this true in the matter of creating and cementing fraternal feeling among worthy members of the profession. With identical aims and ambitions, the petty jealousies and sneering criticisms disappear when practitioners get together and learn to know each other more intimately and find how much in common there is in the noble work to which they are devoting their lives.

The investigation into the affairs of the "Beef Trust" has brought to light some interesting

#### A QUESTION OF "PURE FOOD."

facts. All cattle are inspected by Government inspectors before being slaughtered, and if no signs of disease are noted, they are passed and the dressed beef is ticketed as having "passed inspection," and is thus tacitly guaranteed by the United States Government. (It would be interesting to know what proportion of the cattle "passed" is really diseased.) But not only is the dressed beef thus guaranteed, but all the various products, tinned meats, sausage, etc., are also marked as having "passed Government inspection," a statement that doubtless arouses in the average mind a belief that the article so marked is pure and free from adulterants or preservatives. A high official of one of the big packing houses testified that bologna sausage was colored with zingiber, in order to give it the appearance of good red beef, and that the casing is dipped in gum shellac in order to seal it and prevent deterioration. Mr. Frisbie's crowning argument as to the wholesomeness of this "doctored" sausage, which bears the stamp of having passed United States Government inspection, was: "I ate some yesterday morning and am still alive." Truly, Mr. Frisbie is a brave man. The superintendent of another house testified that "In the preparation of dressed beef we use no preservatives, only water. \* \* \* The meat is kept in coolers three days, then shipped with muslin covers. No chemicals are used." The German Government chemists found that the outer inch of all American dressed beef submitted to them contained a minimum of 5 per cent pure boracic acid. This should be looked into by the American packing houses, for if they use "no chemicals, only water," some one is putting boracic acid on their beef in order to injure their business. The German Government is not averse to allowing its people to eat borated meat, but it objects to having American dressed beef, shipped as free from preservatives, contain *quite* so much boracic acid.

The San Bernardino County Society has completed the necessary arrangements for affiliation with the State Society, and is now in line for protection and progress.

Fresno and Riverside Counties are also important recent additions. There are no counties in the State, or at least but few, not now represented in the State Society, either through affiliation of local bodies or through individual membership. Illinois State Medical Society is at present the strongest in point of numbers in the country, the total membership being over 4000; and this splendid organization was effected largely through the well-directed efforts of Dr. Kreider, State secretary, and editor of the *Illinois State Journal*.